

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the war on terror is slow going. In Iraq, suicide bombers and terrorists continue to spread fear across the Sunni provinces in the center of the country. Many of our soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice. Some folks here at home wonder where the war is going.

It is important to step back and look at the big picture. Just this week, millions of Iraqis have once again exercised the right to vote, a right denied them for decades. And yesterday, the Tyrant of Baghdad was brought to trial.

Two things we take for granted here at home: the right to choose our own government and the guarantee of real justice in a court of law. Saddam Hussein is at long last standing trial for his crimes against humanity. The chickens are coming home to roost for those who have painted the past with blood, and the people of Iraq with their ink-stained fingers are creating a new tomorrow according to popular will.

No matter how difficult life remains in Baghdad and the Anbar Province, the future is now full of hope.

Mr. Speaker, we are the good guys in this war. We are helping create a better world. God bless our troops and the citizens of the new Iraq.

#### ASSISTANCE FOR AMERICA'S POOR

(Mr. MARKEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have decided not to bring the bill to the House floor today which would slash Medicaid, slash programs for student loans, slash programs for poor people because many conservatives say they are not cutting enough programs for poor people, all to protect tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. All to protect tax breaks for the wealthiest Americans. And what is the excuse they have used? Hurricane Katrina.

That is why they must cut more programs for poor people, because they do not want to cut the tax cuts, and now they want to delay because Hurricane Wilma is on the way, and the Republicans are saying, Let us wait until the weekend is over and see how big that hurricane is, and then we will be able to cut more programs for poor people, more programs for those most in need in our society, rather than touching those tax breaks for the wealthiest in our country.

Mr. Speaker, hurricanes are the greatest friend conservative Republicans ever had to hurt the poorest people in the country and protect the wealthiest.

#### COMMENDING CENTURY COUNCIL

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Conference to recognize the Century Council and Nickelodeon for their creation of an innovative new program to educate middle school kids about underaged drinking.

The Century Council is a national not-for-profit organization funded by America's leading distillers to develop and implement programs designed to combat drunk driving and underaged drinking.

The Congressional Hispanic Conference has teamed up with Century Council and Nickelodeon to launch Ask, Listen, Learn: Kids and Alcohol Do Not Mix. The program helps adults and children communicate early and often about this important issue in a format and a language designed specifically for them.

I commend the Century Council and Nickelodeon for giving Hispanic parents and children across the Nation such a valuable communications tool to initiate these critically important discussions regarding the dangers of alcohol.

#### NO NEW TAX ON HOMEOWNERSHIP

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, the cost to buy a new home is about to go up in America. Why is that? Because as soon as next week, Congress is about to vote on placing a new tax on homeownership, a tax that may well raise the cost for the average American who wants to buy their new home.

Years ago, Congress set up Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac with the noble intent to add liquidity to the marketplace and help home buyers. But in an about-face, Congress is about to impose a new tax and at the same time fail to address an inherent flaw in the current system.

Mr. Speaker, legislation before the House would allow Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to continue to rack up debt on their balance sheets with no limits. These are the same organizations that have been wracked with financial accounting scandals, may have 1.5 to \$1.7 trillion on their balance sheets right now. I say "may" because no one can get a clear financial picture from these entities.

Alan Greenspan has testified to this problem repeatedly, noting that without restriction on the size of the GSE balance sheets, we put at risk our ability to preserve safe and sound financial markets in the United States. American homeowners deserve better. We need to help them and not hurt them.

#### DEMOCRATS NEED A NEW PLAY

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a fiscal conservative to set the record straight that Republicans are the party of fiscal discipline. Earlier this year, Republicans passed the budget that cut \$100 billion from the deficit. What did Democrats do? They refused to vote for the budget, another act in their play of obstruction.

Republicans have recommended 98 programs be terminated for a total savings of more than \$4.3 billion. And under Republican leadership, domestic discretionary spending is currently on track to be below last year's levels. What have the Democrats done? Over the last 3 years they have attempted to bust the discretionary budget in the appropriations process by more than \$60 billion. They hope to finance this by raising taxes on small businesses.

So it is not surprising at a time when we must be watchful of taxpayer dollars the Democrats have turned to their playbook and called up one of their favorites, the old tax and spend.

It is time for the Democrats to come up with a new play. In 1997, 51 Democrats had the courage to help Republicans pass the last major entitlement reform bill. I hope they can find that courage again.

#### PROTECTION OF LAWFUL COMMERCE IN ARMS ACT

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 493, I call up the Senate bill (S. 397) to prohibit civil liability actions from being brought or continued against manufacturers, distributors, dealers, or importers of firearms or ammunition for damages, injunctive or other relief resulting from the misuse of their products by others, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 397

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS; PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

(2) The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution protects the rights of individuals, including those who are not members of a militia or engaged in military service or training, to keep and bear arms.

(3) Lawsuits have been commenced against manufacturers, distributors, dealers, and importers of firearms that operate as designed and intended, which seek money damages and other relief for the harm caused by the misuse of firearms by third parties, including criminals.